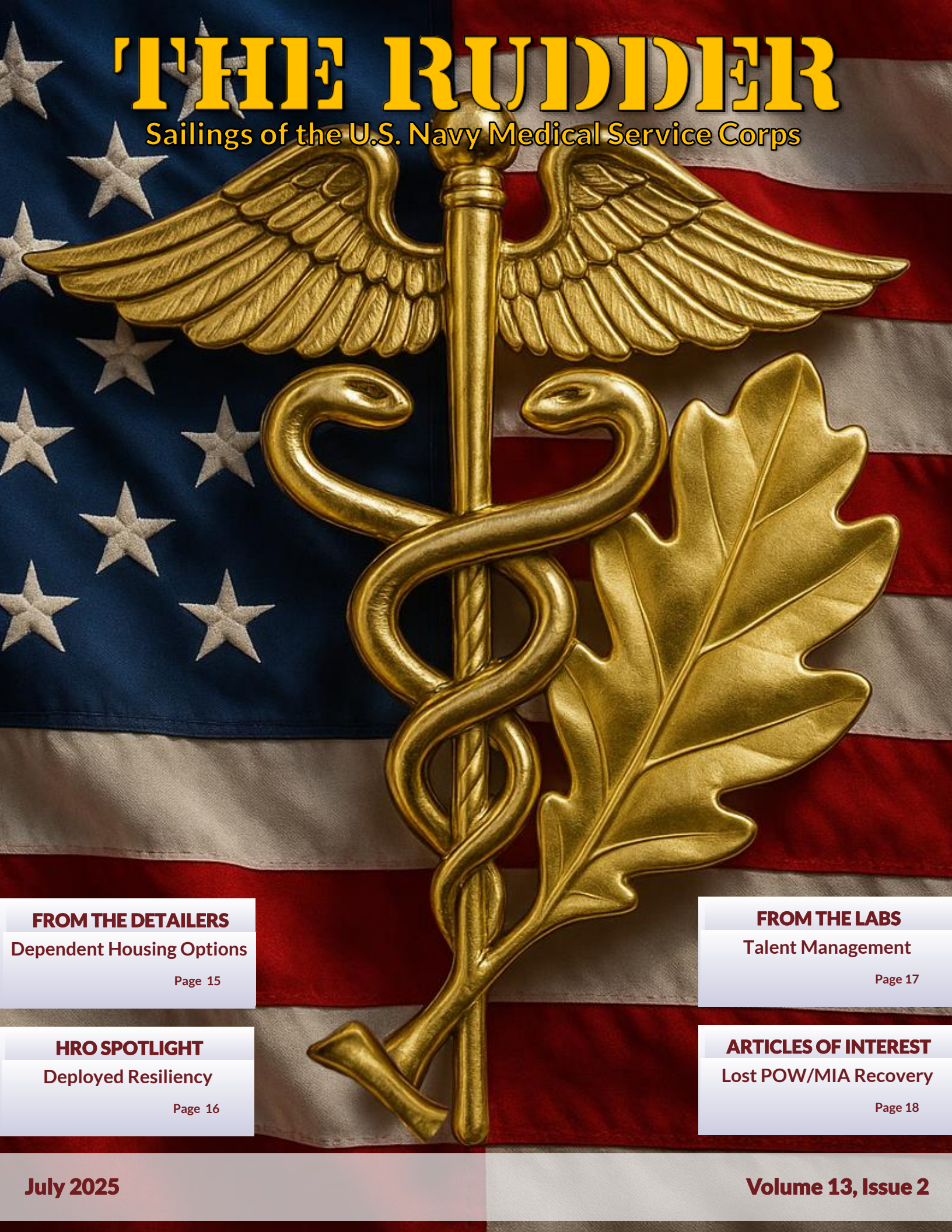
THE RUDDER

Sailings of the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps



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July 2025

Volume 13, Issue 2

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Note that this site is CAC-enabled.

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FROM THE MSC DIRECTOR

MSC Colleagues,

It is with great pride that I welcome you back to the latest edition of The Rudder. After a temporary pause during a review of the Department of Defense, The Rudder returns with renewed vigor, new faces, and a new philosophy going forward!

Foremost, Bravo Zulu to the 2024 MSC Officers of the Year! These officers are deserving of Corps-wide recognition for their accomplishments, dedication, and continued success in support of our warfighters. Please take a moment and join me in congratulating them on their achievement!

In this issue, we review housing flexibility for dependents in "From the Detailers," talent management from the submarine community in "From the Labs," and the HRO spotlight explores a resiliency project during submarine deployment. We also welcome Lt Kionna Myles to the Corps Chief's Office as the new Liaison Officer.

You will notice some changes in The Rudder content. Our goal is to develop this publication as the one-stop-shop for all professional development advice in the MSC community. New columns and sections will be forthcoming and existing columns will re-scope their focus on how to become a better MSC officer. Articles will be informative and provide more information about upcoming professional development opportunities. We also invite MSC officers, and especially senior MSC officers, to become regular contributors to each column. We want The Rudder to become a mentorship vehicle. Thank you to Cmdr Jason Duff who was the first to contribute to this new effort!

(continued on next page)

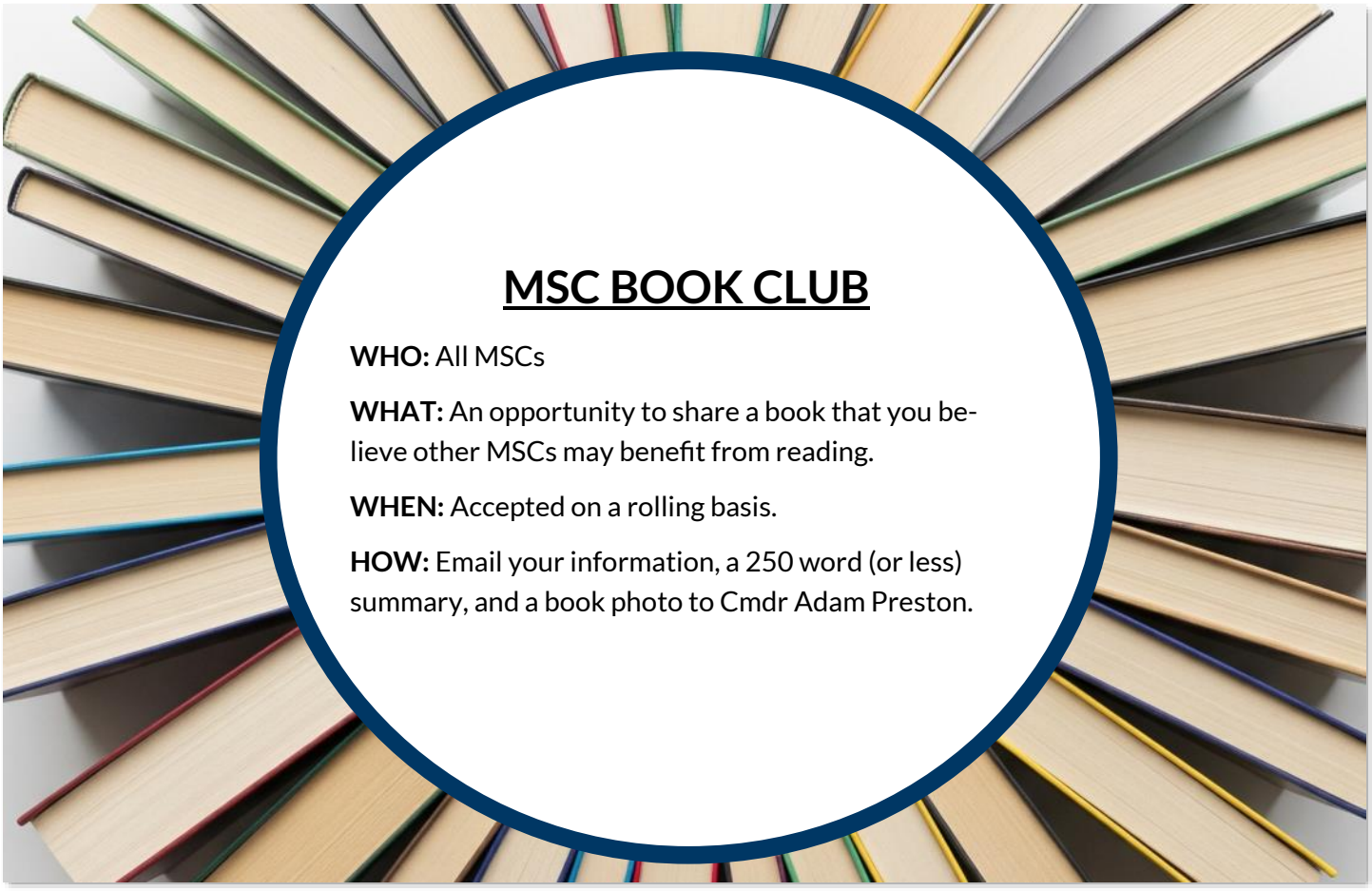
Finally, we would like to thank Capt Rodel Divina for his years of dedicated service to this publication. Capt Divina served as Editor-in-Chief for The Rudder for 3 years. Cmdr Adam Preston is the new co-Editor alongside veteran Rudder staff member, Lt. Cmdr Adam Biggs. Along with new staff members Lt Cheryl Kivlehan and Lt Crystal Shin, The Rudder staff is ushering The Rudder into a new era. Thank you!

With respect and admiration! M. Case

M. CASE
Rear Admiral, Medical Service Corps
United States Navy
Director, Medical Service Corps

Content Submissions

For anyone interested in submitting content for the Rudder, you can submit content directly to the editors or through the corresponding column lead noted on the last page of each issue.



MSC BOOK CLUB

WHO: All MSCs

WHAT: An opportunity to share a book that you believe other MSCs may benefit from reading.

WHEN: Accepted on a rolling basis.

HOW: Email your information, a 250 word (or less) summary, and a book photo to Cmdr Adam Preston.

CORPS CHIEF'S OFFICE

SPECIALTY LEADER TRANSITIONS

Cmdr Jenifer Scancella
Outgoing Biochemistry
Specialty Leader

Cmdr Theron Hamilton
Incoming Biochemistry
Specialty Leader

Capt Joe Stastny
Outgoing Industrial Hygiene
Specialty Leader

Cmdr Nicholas "Cody" Schaal
Incoming Industrial Hygiene
Specialty Leader

SPECIALTY LEADER TRANSITIONS

Cmdr Matthew Kasper
Outgoing Microbiology
Specialty Leader

Cmdr Kimberly Edgel
Incoming Microbiology
Specialty Leader

Capt Kevin Bailey
Outgoing POMI
Specialty Leader

Capt Elizabeth "Beth" Skorey
Incoming POMI
Specialty Leader

CORPS CHIEF'S OFFICE

MEET OUR NEW MSC LIAISON OFFICER, Lt KIONNA MYLES, MSC, USN

By: Mr. Andre Sobocinski, BUMED Historian

Lt Kionna Myles' arrival in January 2025 as the new Medical Service Corps Liaison Officer marks the culmination of a remarkable journey. The Navy was not always in the picture for this South Boston, Va., native and daughter of an Army Special Forces soldier. Prior to enlisting, Lt Myles seriously considered a different path.

"I had aspirations of becoming either a nurse or a fashion designer," said Lt Myles. "I've always had a passion for fashion and enjoyed creating unique pieces. Growing up, both of my grandmothers were skilled seamstresses, and they helped me make quilts and create customized outfits for occasions like Career Day. My maternal grandmother worked in the medical field, and her successful career inspired me as well. She often highlighted the opportunities and financial stability that nursing could provide, which initially set me on that path and became my primary focus."

Lt Myles enlisted in the Hospital Corps since it aligned with her nursing interest, ultimately affording her unique opportunities from her first duty station at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP) to operational experience with Fleet Surgical Team SEVEN, Okinawa, Japan. "Every experience was unique and contributed to my growth as a leader," related Lt Myles. "These roles honed my mental fortitude, perseverance, and resilience. I am especially grateful for the mentorship from the leaders who guided my development along the way."

After impressing her leadership with unparalleled initiative while serving as a Training Petty Officer at NMCP, her chief (Antoinette Saunders, who would later become a Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps) suggested she explore the Medical Service Corps. "She encouraged me to attend the MSC Symposium that same day (what a coincidence), where my interest in becoming a Health Care Administrator was sparked," said Lt Myles. "Despite not knowing what a Health Care Administrator was prior to this experience, I was very clear that this was my future. I realigned my focus and ensured that my future career decisions aligned with this end goal in mind."

As she completed her degree in healthcare administration, Lt Myles immersed herself in everything Medical Service Corps — from exploring the Medical Service Corps milSuite page to reading every issue of *The Rudder*. Lt Myles even began shadowing officers where she discovered the significant role the Medical Service Corps plays in enhancing operational effectiveness and shaping the future of Navy Medicine. "This experience not only fueled my desire to commission but also inspired me to give back to the community in a similar capacity at BUMED, making this opportunity feel like a full-circle moment for me," related Lt Myles.

Now, as the new MSC liaison, Lt Myles is poised to leverage her background to strengthen the vital connections between the Navy Medical Service Corps and its partners. Her responsibilities include planning and executing strategic initiatives, managing communication channels, overseeing high-level programs and processes, and supporting the recruitment, retention, and professional development of Navy Medical Service Corps Officers — directly contribute to the Navy Surgeon General's Lines of Effort.

"I am excited about mastering my role to the highest degree of excellence while also paying it forward to others in the community and those who aspire to become a part of the community," said Lt Myles. "The opportunities, experiences, and meaningful impact I've gained from my time in the Navy are invaluable. There truly is no other place I would rather be. The Navy holds a special place in my heart, and I genuinely enjoy the opportunity to serve and represent something bigger than myself."

In Memoriam

Lt. Cmdr Johnathan Lee Swiger

It is with deep sorrow that we share the passing of one of our fellow Medical Service Corps shipmates, Naval Aerospace and Operational Physiologist #268, Lt. Cmdr Johnathan Lee "Swinger" Swiger (Pictured above). His obituary, with further details, can be found here.

CORPS CHIEF'S OFFICE

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!

Lt Adam Braly
Aerospace Experimental Psychology

Lt. Cmdr Jolene Mancini
Audiology

Lt. Cmdr Corey Fugate
Biochemistry

Lt Alexandra Carry
Clinical Psychology
Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Marcus VanSickle
Clinical Psychology
Senior Category

Lt Ashley Dyke
Clinical Social Work
Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Griselda Haywood
Clinical Social Work
Senior Category

Lt Donte Brackett
Dietetics/Food Management

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!

Lt Adam Salyer

Entomology

Lt Nickolas Lamal

Environmental Health Officer

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Nickita Brown

Environmental Health Officer

Senior Category

Lt Karla Liendo

Financial Management

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Steven Bell

Financial Management

Senior Category

Lt Kristen Matson

Healthcare Administration

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Brittany Haden

Healthcare Administration

Cmdr Alexander Aldana

Health Facility Planning & Project

CORPS CHIEF'S OFFICE

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!

Lt Emmanuel Dadzie

Health Information Technology

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Reginald Whittaker

Health Information Technology

Senior Category

Lt Peter Sackett

Industrial Hygiene

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Anthony Allen

Industrial Hygiene

Senior Category

Lt Anna Dolgova

Manpower & Personnel

Lt Sasha Tittel

Medical Laboratory Science

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Timothy Hopkins

Medical Laboratory Science

Lt John Price Jr

Medical Logistics

Junior Category

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!

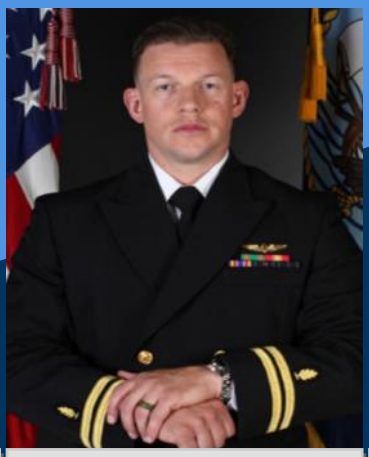
Lt. Cmdr Silas Spain

Medical Logistics

Senior Category

Lt. Cmdr Sarah Jenkins

Microbiology



Lt Tyler Grubic

Naval Aerospace and Operational Physiology

Lt Jeff Bazanele

Occupational Therapy

Lt Aidan Stubbs

Optometry

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Mark Debano

Optometry

Senior Category

Lt Cheryl Kivlehan

Patient Administration

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Samuel Woodson

Patient Administration

Senior Category

CORPS CHIEF'S OFFICE

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!

Lt Meagan Rawers
Pharmacy
Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr James Spence
Pharmacy
Senior Category

Lt Byron Barbour
Physical Therapy
Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Katelyn Howenstine
Physical Therapy
Senior Category

Lt Ryan Boudreau
Physician Assistant
Junior Category

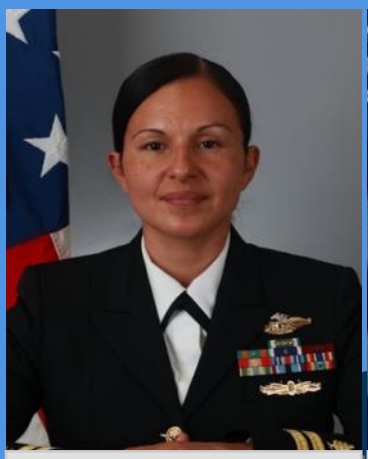
Lt. Cmdr Benjamin Mattox
Physician Assistant
Senior Category

Lt Matthew Peterson
Physiology

Lt. Cmdr Michael Gibboney
Podiatry

2024 MEDICAL SERVICE CORPS OFFICERS OF THE YEAR

BRAVO ZULU SHIPMATES!



Lt Gricel Rodriguez

Plans, Operation, and Medical Intelligence

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Amy Welkie

Plans, Operation, and Medical Intelligence

Senior Category

Lt. Cmdr David Boozer

Radiation Health

Junior Category

Lt. Cmdr Matthew Japzon

Radiation Health

Senior Category

Lt Jacob Westerberg

Research Psychology

Medical Service Corps Officer of the Year

PURPOSE

To recognize Medical Service Corps (MSC) Officers whose leadership, professional knowledge, and administrative, clinical, or scientific expertise have made significant contributions that enhanced warfighter performance, operational capability, and medical readiness, and who represent the best of Navy Medicine.

CATEGORIES

Each MSC specialty will have at least one opportunity to recognize an officer of the year. Specialties with more than 50 officers may recognize both a junior (O-1 to O-3) and a senior (O-4 to O-5) officer category.

The 2025 Nomination Window Is Open!

Contact Your Specialty Leader To Nominate Your Hard-Working Colleagues!

RESERVE UPDATE

NAVY RESERVE OPTOMETRISTS IN ACTION

New London, Conn. Pictured left (L-R): Lt. Cmdr Matthew Weinheimer and Cmdr Patricia Salazar, both Navy Reserve optometrists, are seen supporting and overseeing optometric care to Service members and staff at Naval Branch Clinic Groton during a period of gapped billets in June 2024. Cmdr Salazar serves as the Reserve Optometry Specialty Leader and oversees seven other optometrists as well as four dietitians. Additionally, she is the Command Manager Equal Opportunity Program Manager for Navy Reserve Navy Medical Readiness and Training Command (NR NMRTC) Great Lakes and Assistant Officer in Charge for the Virtual Detachment of NR NMRTC Jacksonville. Lt. Cmdr Weinheimer is the Assistant Officer in Charge of NR NMRTC Great Lakes' Administrative Support Unit (ASU) where he provides administrative and training oversight for the 130-member medical unit. His unit provides manpower and surge support to NMRTC Great Lakes and other accession sites within Naval Medical Forces Atlantic (NMFL).

Yap, Federated States of Micronesia. Pictured right: Navy Reserve Capt Sharlene Gee, Optometry, examines a patient for a glasses fitting during a visit to Yap State Hospital on 5 September 2024 in support of Pacific Partnership 24-2. Now in its 20th iteration, the Pacific Partnership series is the U.S. Navy's largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Pacific Partnership works collaboratively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase security and stability in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Raymond D. Diaz III/Released)

HOUSING FLEXIBILITY FOR DEPENDENTS

*All options listed apply to Sailors **with dependents**. Only **one** housing allowance is authorized at a time for any Sailor.*

HOUSING OPTION	*ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:*
Advance Dependent Travel (ADT) ADT allows the Sailor to send their dependents early to the next Permanent Duty Station (PDS) and to receive a housing allowance for that location prior to the Sailor arriving at the new PDS. This allows dependents to get their family situated prior to the arrival of the Sailor. Most approved ADT requests allow for entitlements to start up to 180 days before the Sailor transfers, but some cases may allow entitlements even earlier.	*1) Ultimate command is conducting a Homeport Change (HPC)* *2) Dependent enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)* *3) Dependent caring for an immediate family member with chronic or long term illness* *4) Ultimate Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) command is deployed at the time of Permanent Change of Station (PCS)* *5) School-age children (grades K-12) enrolled in school at the time of PCS* *6) Spouse employment (defined as full-time employment)* *7) Orders have intermediate stops in route to the ultimate PDS*
Delayed Dependent Travel (DDT) DDT allows the Sailor to keep their dependents at the old PDS location (or previously approved location) and to receive a housing allowance for that location until the authorized period ends. This allows dependents to remain at the old PDS for a period of time. Most approved DDT request continue entitlements up to 180 days after the Sailor transfers, but some cases may allow entitlements to continue even longer.	*1) Ultimate command is conducting a HPC* *2) Dependent enrolled in the EFMP* *3) Dependent caring for an immediate family member with chronic or long term illness* *4) Ultimate OCONUS command is deployed at the time of PCS* *5) School-age children (grades K-12) enrolled in school at the time of PCS* *6) Spouse employment (defined as full-time employment)* *7) Orders have intermediate stops in route to the ultimate PDS* *8) Pre-commissioning unit (PCU) Initial Delay Homeport Shift*
Continuation of Station Allowances (COSA) COSA allows the Sailor to keep their dependents at the old PDS location (or previously approved location) and receive a housing allowance for that location for the Sailors entire tour.	*1) Dependent enrolled in the EFMP and is Category 5* *2) Intermediate stops without an ultimate PDS* *3) Sailor in a LIMDU status* *4) Sailor ordered to a PCU* *5) Ultimate PDS is PME for 12 months or less* *6) Orders are unaccompanied, dependent-restricted or to a command designated as Unusually Arduous Sea Duty (UASD)* *7) Orders to NAS Lemoore, Fallon, China Lake, or El Centro.*

How do I receive ADT/DDT/COSA?

1. Meet eligibility requirements
2. Get CO recommendation
3. Apply by sending package (i.e., request, CO recommendation, updated Page 2, orders, additional information) to NXAG_N130C@navy.mil (OCONUS entitlements and PCUs) or PERS451@navy.mil (CONUS entitlements)
4. For more information, including references, visit the N130C webpage at: https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/Pay-Benefits/N130C/

HRO SPOTLIGHT

SUBMARINE READINESS: PRE– AND POST-DEPLOYMENT RESILIENCY PROJECT

By: Lt Rebekah "Gwen" Riley, PhD, Clinical Psychology, NMRTC New England

Groton, Conn. Pictured above (R-L): VADM Robert Gaucher, Commander, Submarine Forces, presents Lt. Cmdr Samantha Giangrande with a challenge coin in recognition of her work with Submarine Forces and receiving the Arthur W. Melton Early Career Achievement Award, American Psychological Association, Division 19.

To maximize efficacy, many mental health resources should be taught and implemented before incidents occur. Lt. Cmdr Samantha Giangrande created and implemented the post-deployment resiliency pilot program for Submarine Readiness Squandron-32 (SRS-32) — the first of its kind in the Submarine Force to improve mental health outcomes while on deployment and as service members return home. Lt. Cmdr Giangrande's leadership at SRS-32 resulted in a 53% increase in return to duty rates across the waterfront. A data analysis on the post-deployment resiliency pilot program outcomes is forthcoming.

Sensitivity to Operations: Lt. Cmdr Giangrande recognized that undersea medical officers (UMO) have procedures in place for pre- and post-deployment work-ups; however, the mental health program did not have coinciding procedures. The benefits of assessment and interventions before and after a deployment necessitated a plan to improve mental health outcomes for the SRS-32.

Commitment to Resilience: The program created by Lt. Cmdr Giangrande equips Sailors with coping skills that can foster positive long-term outcomes. This programming highlights how vital resilience is to mission success and benefits Sailors beyond their current command: extending to their homes, their communities and throughout their military careers.

Deference to Expertise: Lt. Cmdr Giangrande extensively researched emotional intelligence, emotional and explosive decompression, psychology of Olympic athletes, and other performance psychology literature to amplify the legitimacy and cultural alignment of the post-deployment reintegration program as it relates to submariners. Her expertise led to the development of an exceptional program that will have generational impact.

Respect for People: In tandem with the Fleet and Family Support Center, Lt. Cmdr Giangrande offered a post-deployment resiliency program to the submarine families at their Family Readiness Group (FRG) meeting. Family member participation in the post-deployment process improves results and aids in Sailors' ability to maintain coping skills learned as they reintegrate into their homes. The Program ethos has been guided by her compassion for Sailors and passion for mission readiness.

Preoccupation with Failure: During the first iteration of this program, Lt. Cmdr Giangrande had multiple touch points with the submarine crew to ensure that she could anticipate needs and be flexible with her approach. While underway, she interacted with all on and off going sections in crew's mess, provided face-to-face education on emotional decompression, and provided literature and a quick resource guide that they could utilize as needed.

Constancy of Purpose: Lt. Cmdr Giangrande consulted with experts in the field and with command leadership as she developed and reworked the resiliency program. The goal was to decrease the number of negative outcomes during mission and upon return. With this in mind, she aligned the program to be innovative, adaptable and planned for long-term success rather than implementing a reactionary and short-term solution.

MODERNIZING TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE SUBMARINE FORCE

By: Lt Jennifer Louie, Ph.D., MSC, USN, Dominica Hernandez, Ph.D., Dana Dilweg, M.A., Matthew Hanson, Ph.D., and Justin Handy, Ph.D.

Groton, CT. USS Hyman Rickover (SSN 795) near its homeport at the Submarine Base New London.

What makes an effective leader? Although people may agree on generalities, nailing down specifics can be challenging. Among a myriad examples of how leadership can contribute to casualties and incidents, poor leadership was identified as a contributing factor in the collision of the USS Connecticut. In this case, the Commanding Officer's reluctance to receive feedback led to a poor command climate and nearly 40% of the crew seeking mental health treatment after the mishap (Toropin, 2022).

At the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory (NSMRL) on Submarine Base New London (Groton, CT), researchers within the Naval Psychological Readiness and Human Performance (NPRHP) team are spearheading efforts to develop a submarine leadership competency model that outlines critical characteristics for leader success in the submarine environment. The model development process included: 1) a review of existing research on leadership effectiveness in military and extreme environments; 2) structured interviews and focus groups using submarine leadership subject matter experts (SMEs); 3) a survey in which these SMEs were asked to rate each specific attribute identified in the focus groups; and 4) interviews on how critical (or detrimental) each attribute was for effective (or ineffective) leadership for each member of the submarine command triad. This Submarine Leadership Competency Model is being incorporated into Submarine Officer leadership development programs to further test its efficacy and in identifying the most critical behaviors for effective leadership.

The NPRHP team's work is timely, as the demand for effective leaders is increasing dramatically due to the U.S. military's struggles to meet recruitment needs (Philipps, 2023). By building the leadership competency model, the NPRHP team hopes to integrate a developmental framework earlier in the training pipeline to both identify attributes of highly effective submarine leaders and to develop those attributes across the Submarine Force. By focusing on early submarine leader development, the process will ingrain effective behaviors before bad habits contribute to long-term problems.

As the submarine talent management modernization effort continues to evolve, NPRHP will refine and improve the leadership models to better measure effective leadership. These initial years of the modernization effort are a significant stepping-stone, as this is the first year where submarine command qualification is incorporating a framework for the "soft skills" of effective submarine leaders. This affords the submarine command qualification board a more complete picture of not only a candidate submarine leader's technical competence, but also their socioemotional competence, ensuring that the future of the Submarine Force is led by those who are not only the most technically skilled personnel, but also the most skilled in leading effectively.

Sources:
Philipps, D. (2023, October 17). U.S. Army, Navy and Air Force struggle for recruits. The Marines have plenty. The New York Times.
https://www.nytimes.com/2023/10/17/us/marines-army-recruits.html
Toropin, K. (2022, May 24). "Accumulation of errors and omissions" led to Connecticut crash, Navy concludes. Military News.
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2022/05/24/accumulation-of-errors-and-omissions-led-connecticut-crash-navy-concludes.html

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY: RECOVERING OUR LOST SERVICE MEMBERS

By: Cmdr Jason Duff, Director, Midshipmen Development Center, United States Naval Academy

Since August 2022, I have been stationed at the United States Naval Academy (USNA) as the Director of the Midshipmen Development Center. USNA prepares Midshipmen in various ways for the multitude of experiences they will encounter as Navy and Marine Corps officers.

Da Nang, Vietnam. Pictured above: Midshipmen Second Class (MIDN 2/C) Kai Braaten (far right) and other DPAA augmentees taking part in a dignified transfer of potential osseous material at the Da Nang International Airport in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in June 2024).

In direct alignment with the USNA mission, USNA faculty will frequently assume other responsibilities in addition to their primary roles, such as accompanying Midshipmen on important field assignments that involve overseas travel. Here, we received the opportunity to support the enduring and ever-important Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's (DPAA) mission.

DPAA recovers and identifies unaccounted Department of Defense personnel listed as prisoners of war or missing in action from designated past conflicts from countries around the world. I was particularly interested in the unmatched recovery efforts, the interagency cooperation, partnerships with the investigation teams, and the collaboration with Host Nations.

I learned USNA was looking to partner with DPAA in the summer of 2024. This was only the second time USNA and DPAA have ever collaborated. I quickly jumped at the chance to work with Midshipmen as a liaison for USNA and DPAA on this critical, consequential, and rare mission. We were headed to Vietnam in an attempt to account for service members who never returned home.

The Midshipmen and I shared a palpable enthusiasm for this extraordinary assignment. This mission was one more opportunity for all of us from USNA to exemplify the United States Navy's core values of honor, courage, and commitment. There are ample influences around the Yard to remind us of the importance of such missions. This includes USNA's 2023 recognition of the 50th anniversary of OPERATION HOMECOMING when 591 Americans POWs were freed from Vietnamese captivity.

USNA counts Memorial Hall among its sacred spaces. This impressive structure has undoubtedly had a profound effect on all those privileged to enter. Memorial Hall honors all Naval Academy graduates who perished serving our country. This includes a list of almost 1,000 alumni killed in action situated poignantly under Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's "Don't Give Up the Ship" flag. For over two hundred years, Captain James Lawrence's dying utterance has motivated countless individuals into action… to persist no matter how difficult a situation may be. This flag and its reverberating message were proudly carried with us throughout our time in Vietnam.

Vietnam. Cmdr Jason Duff with local Vietnamese workers who supported the DPAA's 24-3VN recovery mission in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam May through Jun 2024.

(continued on next page)

Vietnam. Pictured above (L-R): Midshipmen Third Class (MIDN 3/C) Alphonse Trapanese and Cmdr Jason Duff conduct location and recovery efforts in support of DPAA's 24-3VN mission in the jungle of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in June 2024.

All this to say, we were clearly inspired, motivated, and ready to take on this mission. The Midshipmen were an excellent match for this mission as they also exemplify the core values of DPAA: compassion, integrity, teamwork, respect, and innovation. For example, they leaned in on the opportunity to collaborate with the host country and service members from our sister services. Collaborations that will be priceless in their development as officers.

There were various mission sites during our 2-month long endeavor. Each of these locations had unique challenges for the teams to overcome. Our main group of 50+ individuals was separated into smaller groups in order to work on three different recovery missions. My team included two of the four Midshipmen. We stayed in a guest house in a small Vietnamese town for weeks.

Each morning we were picked up by government officials who took us up into the mountains to our dig site. There we were greeted by 125 locals who supported our laborious search efforts. We worked nine days in a row with every tenth day "off". An "off" day would often include a cultural experience such as visiting Hamburger Hill or traveling to a nearby city for guided tours.

Through our linguist and creative engagement, we worked closely with the locals to keep operations running smoothly. We were especially focused on keeping morale high during the back-breaking work in excessive humidity and temperatures in the high 90s and above.

We worked closely with a multidisciplinary, joint service team that included an Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) technician, a Scientific Recovery Expert (SRE; archeologist), and a Life Support Investigator (LSI; aircraft wreckage and life support expert).

We should continue to sustain the partnership between DPAA and USNA whenever possible. The Midshipmen are hardworking, dedicated, and they represent the best our Nation has to offer. They were ideally cut out to positively influence the success of this important mission set. Moreover, I also believe that those of us in the diverse and talented Medical Service Corps can bring our unique skillsets to bear for DPAA as they navigate complex, arduous recovery efforts around the world. I encourage you to consider supporting these worthwhile missions as you are able: https://www.dpaa.mil/

With dedication, integrity, and collaboration our entire team worked to provide dignified, honorable, and safe recovery efforts. I am thrilled to share that our efforts paid off as we discovered osseous material that was analyzed in DPAA's world class labs. One of our teams discovered remains that of Lieutenant Colonel Donald Downing. Downing went missing over Vietnam in 1967 during an armed night reconnaissance mission while piloting an F-4C Phantom II aircraft. It is incredibly fulfilling for all involved that 57 years later the noble efforts of DPAA have secured accountability for Lt Col Downing.

POW and MIA individuals from all wars are not forgotten. Since 1973, the remains of over 1,000 Americans killed during Vietnam have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors. However, from the Vietnam War alone, 1,567 personnel remain missing. The DPAA mission is significant. Take heart, they are working consistently "fulfilling our nation's promise" to assure "no one left behind."

Vietnam. Pictured above: Cmdr Jason Duff (far right, second row) works with members of DPAA's 24-3VN mission high in the mountains of Vietnam near the Vietnamese-Laos border. Midshipmen Third Class (MIDN 3/C) Benning Rojas-Kerbow (left side) and MIDN 3/C Alphonse Trapanese (right side) are holding the POW/MIA Flag.

MSCs IN FOCUS

Bethesda, MD. Lt David Jimenez and Lt Yana Villanueva, IHOs, received their Masters of Science in Public Health on May 18th, 2025, at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences graduation at the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Congratulations! Pictured from left to right: MAJ Stefanie Silsby, Lt David Jimenez, Dr. Luka .

Bethesda, MD. Lt David Jimenez, IHO, received the Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences Student Excellence Award from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. This award celebrates his exceptional achievement in academics, scholarship, and service, as well as his outstanding leadership as an officer, peer, and mentor.

Kansas City, Missouri. Lt Yana Villanueva U.S. Navy IHO presented the results of her MSPH thesis titled "Impact of Dynamic Flight on Whole Body Vibration Exposure in Aircraft" during a podium session.

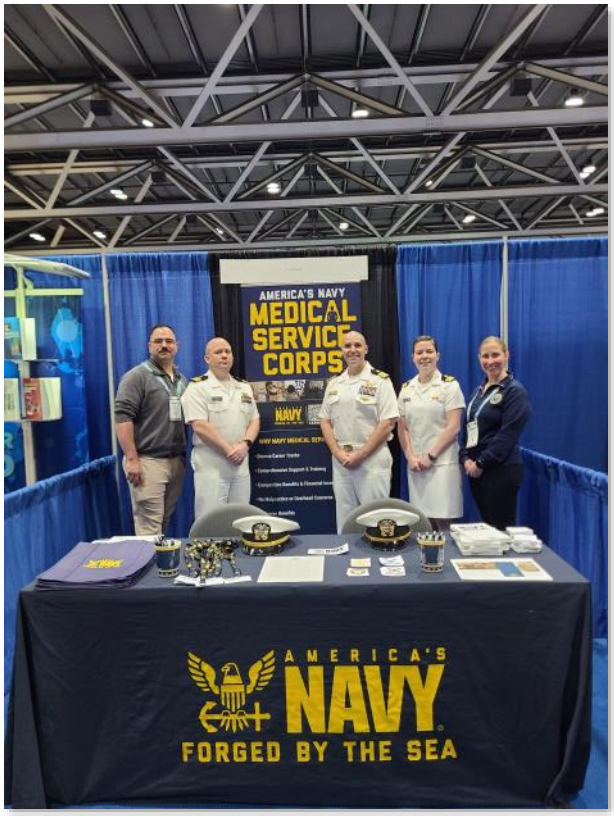
San Antonio, TX. Lt Mogaji is presented with the inaugural 2025 Graduate Allied Health Education (GAHE) Beacon award. The beacon award was designed to recognize trainees that most embodies natural leadership, encouragement, and serves as the guiding light to their peers. Pictured above (L-R): Dr. Mark True, Chief Executive Officer and Designated Institutional Official of SAUSHEC; Lt Oluwakemi R Mogaji, Surgery & Critical Care PA Resident; Maj Alexis Troili-Fletes, Housestaff Council President.

San Antonio, TX. Lt. Cmdr Brittany Hout is presented with the SAUSHEC 2025 Colonel Gerald Wayne Talcott Outstanding Faculty Award. Pictured (L-R): MAJ Ryan McMahon, Surgery & Critical Care PA Residency Program Director; Lt. Cmdr Brittany Hout Surgery & Critical Care PA Residency Associate Program Director.

MSCs IN FOCUS

Okinawa, Japan. The Okinawa Medical Service Corps Association held a Professional Military Education (PME) event, featuring an executive panel of members from major Navy Medicine commands in Okinawa, Japan. The executive panel included: Capt Justin C. Logan (3d Medical Battalion CO), Capt Kathleen K. Cooperman (USNMRTC Okinawa CO), Cmdr Robert P. Nevins (USNMRTC Okinawa DFA), Cmdr Vince E. Deguzman (USNMRTC Okinawa DCSS). The event was geared towards mentoring all MSC Officers on-island, as well as aspiring MSC Officers, enlisted Sailors who have applied or are motivated to apply to become MSC Officers! The event was well attended and all gleaned from the valuable experiences and insights provided by four distinguished leaders from the MSC Community!

Honolulu, Hawaii. Pictured above (R-L): Lt. Cmdr Jennifer Simmons, Entomology, and Lt. Cmdr Nicholas Nelson, Biochemistry, discuss medical careers in the U.S. Navy in front of 65 University of Hawaii graduate and undergraduate students at the John A. Burns School of Medicine on 22 January 2025. The event was in direct support of Navy Surgeon General's Line of Effort focused on recruitment and retention.



Kansas City Missouri. Cmdr Schaal and fellow research collaborators from the Air Force Institute of Technology presented 5 research posters. Research titled "A study of Pure Tone Audiometry Hearing Changes from Ototoxic Metals and Solvents, Continuous Noise, and Impulse Noise" was awarded a Student Poster Award on behalf of the AIHA Noise Committee. Pictured left to right: Cmdr N. Cody Schaal U.S. Navy IHO, Capt Clayton Garner U.S. Air Force Bioenvironmental Engineer, and Capt Faina Feldman Israeli Air Force

Camp Lejeune, N.C. On 15 January 2025, the Eastern North Carolina Medical Service Corps Association hosted Capt Kathryn Barnes, MSC Career Planner, and Cmdr Bryan Pyle, MSC Policy & Practice Officer. The event featured opportunities for one-on-one record review sessions and included a Career Planner presentation. Pictured above: Front Row (L-R): Lt. Cmdr Iris Manso, HCA; LtJG Morgan Gardner, HCA; Lt Rachel Peoples, HCA; Lt. Cmdr Tammy Nguyen, Med Lab Science; Ensign Sara Hutchinson, Med Lab Science; Lt Katie Smith, EHO; Lt Sharley Yowell, Clinical Social Work; Lt. Cmdr Michelle Rizzo-Pelley, EHO; LtJG Michelle Smith, Clinical Social Work; Lt. Cmdr Angela Myers, Podiatry; and Lt. Cmdr Michael Kantar, Dietitics. Middle Row (L-R): Lt. Cmdr Ryan DiParisi, HCA; Lt. Cmdr Noah Epstein, Clinical Psychology; HM2 Yan Ling Huang; Ensign Moises RodriguezTorres, Med Lab Science; Lt Jessica Lee, HCA; Lt. Cmdr Laura Riebel, Physical Therapy; Lt Dean Junio, HCA; Lt. Cmdr Jen Frasco, HCA; Cmdr Kirsten Olah, Audiology; Capt Barnes; LtJG Julia AdamsOlson, Clinical Social Work; Lt Rudy Jones, Physical Therapy; LtJG Jacob Szigethy, Clinical Social Work; Lt Victoria Wong, Entomology; Lt. Cmdr Mike Boca, HCA; and Lt. Cmdr Serge Shkuro, Deputy DFA. Back Row (L-R): LtJG Peyton Oldham, Clinical Social Work; Cmdr Mark Riebel, Physical Therapy; Lt Edward Traczyk, Entomology; Lt Eric Eberspeaker, HCA; Lt. Cmdr Philip Hensley, Clinical Social Work; Cmdr Jason Wright, DFA; Cmdr Pyle; Ensign Cassidy Pagett, Med Lab Science; LtJG Brogan Hoover, Physical Therapy; Lt. Cmdr Dean Olson, HCA; and Lt William Jones, HCA.

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The Medical Service Corps supports Navy Medicine's readiness and health benefits mission. It is the most diverse Officer Corps in Navy Medicine with 31 specialties organized under three major categories: Healthcare Administrators, Clinical Care Specialties, and Healthcare Scientists. There are over 3,000 active and reserve MSC Officers that serve at Military Treatment Facilities, on ships, with the Fleet Marine Force, with Seabee and special warfare units, in research centers and laboratories, in a myriad of staff positions with the Navy and Marine Corps, and with our sister services around the world.

MSC SharePoint

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